



# The IGUANA



May 17, 2002 Volume 14, No. 9

## Operation Chokehold:

*JTF-Bravo Central Skies mission targets Costa Rican marijuana fields*

By 1st Lt. Richard D. Komurek

JTF-Bravo Public Affairs Officer

The Costa Rican police were ready for the hunt with chainsaws, machetes, machine guns and cans full of gasoline.

The goal, as always, was to cut down and burn as many marijuana fields as possible. To reach the small mountainside marijuana fields would require either weeks of hiking through the remote rainforest or the use of a helicopter and equipment that would enable them to rappel into the dense jungle vegetation.

The problem: Costa Rican police don't have helicopters or rappel equipment. The solution: JTF-Bravo's Task Force Enabler.

About 45 JTF-Bravo personnel and six 1-228th Aviation Battalion aircraft participated in Operation Chokehold 2002 near Limon, Costa Rica April 25-April 30.

The Central Skies counterdrug mission, a joint operation between the U.S. Drug Enforcement Agency, U.S. Department of State, Costa Rican police forces and JTF-Bravo personnel, eradicated hundreds of thousands of marijuana plants and provided joint training in a real-world environment.



Photo by 1st Lt. Richard D. Komurek

Staff Sgt. Bart Schrum (second from left), a rappel master for the mission, secures a Special Patrol Infiltration-Exfiltration System to a Costa Rican police officer participating in the Central Skies counter-drug operation. The SPIES equipment was used to insert the policemen into marijuana fields located on steep jungle mountainsides.

See **CHOKEHOLD**, Page 5

## JTF- Chontales holds closing ceremony

Story and photo by Spc. M. William Petersen  
Editor

Even after the last tents were taken down and the few remaining soldiers got in their humvees and departed the closing ceremony May 8, Joint Task Force-Chontales was still affecting lives.

The task force, as part of New Horizons 2002, constructed four schoolhouses, six medical clinics, three wells and more during the four months it was active in Chontales, Nicaragua.

The task force was made up primarily of reserve and National Guard components from 40 units and 20 different states, alongside Nicaraguan troops. Engineers, medics, military police, maintenance and aviation soldiers were only some of the diverse force that reshaped the region.

The impact on the towns where clinics and schools were built was immediately apparent. At the opening of a schoolhouse in El Coral, the mayor of the town was



Photo by Spc. M. William Petersen

**The Nicaraguan honor guard comes to attention shortly before the arrival of the dignitaries.**

in tears as he thanked the American and Nicaraguan soldiers who had constructed the school.

At the closing ceremony, the Vice President of the

Republic of Nicaragua, Dr. José Rizo Castellón, expressed his thanks to the soldiers present and to Lt. Col. Patrick E. Gallagher, JTF-Chontales commander.

Paul Saxton, the Chargé d'Affaires of the United States in Nicaragua, related the more personal side of the mission, as he recounted the occasion when the American soldiers learned that baseball was Nicaragua's national pastime, as well. The Nicaraguan soldiers routed the Americans 19-0.

At the end of the ceremony, the mission of providing humanitarian aid to Nicaraguans continued as food was distributed by U.S. soldiers. While the work took a mere four months, the people of Chontales, would benefit for years.

"I realized here that I've never really done anything with my life until now, and it's amazing to see how much [the work] we do means to these people," said Spc. Hector Molina, an National Guard soldier from New Mexico who served on the last rotation. "One woman approached me and told me that we were angels sent from heaven."



# Commanders Corner

Are you being sued in a court 3,000 miles away?

By Capt. Michael J. Meketen

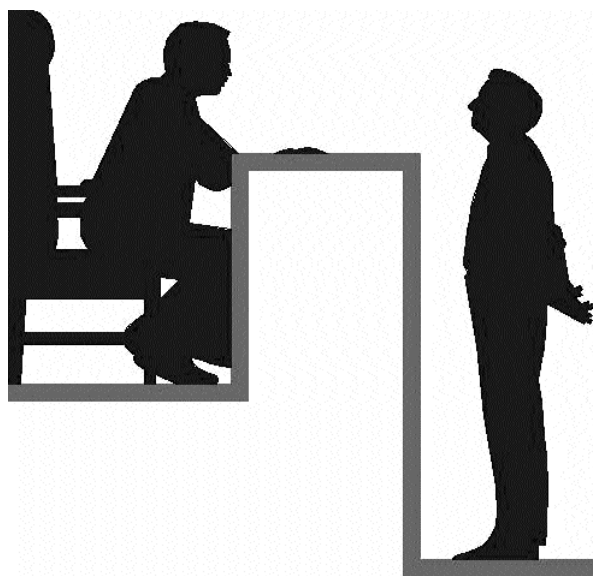
Command Judge Advocate

Have you gone to the mailroom expecting a care package from home only to find a certified letter from a judge ordering you to appear in a courtroom 3,000 miles away five days ago? Have you recently phoned home and were told that you received some "official looking papers" from a magistrate or justice of the peace?

Have you been denied credit because of an "outstanding judgment" against you from a court you never heard of? If you've answered yes to any of these questions you should be interested in the protections afforded to service members by the Soldiers' and Sailors' Civil Relief Act (SSCRA).

The SSCRA is a federal law that provides various protections to soldiers on active duty. One portion of the law protects service members from suffering default judgments in state courts. Congress enacted the law with the understanding that military duty may prohibit service members from defending themselves in court. Because of mobilizations, field exercises, and frequent moves and address changes, some soldiers may not even be aware that they are being sued.

The law requires plaintiffs and courts to determine whether a defendant is on active duty military service before any court can issue a default judgment. A soldier on active duty may request that the court appoint an attorney to represent her prior to any judgment. If the soldier's duty materially interferes with her ability to respond to the action against them, the soldier or the court appointed attorney may request that all proceedings be



stopped. This "stay" of proceedings, however, is not permanent and will be lifted as soon as the soldier's duty no longer interferes. This usually means until the soldier is back from the field or until the soldier can take leave to travel to the States. The law does not make soldiers immune from suit and usually overseas duty is not, by itself, sufficient justification to delay a court proceeding. Also, a default judgment is different from defaulting on a loan, for example. A default judgment is what a plaintiff receives when you do not show up in court. A loan default is just you not paying your loan.

A soldier who has already suffered a default judgment may be able to open that judgment if they can

show that their duty materially affected their ability to make a defense and that they actually have a meritorious defense. Also, the judgment must have been entered while the soldier was on active duty or within 30 days of their release from active duty service, and the soldier must request the relief while on active duty or within 90 days of release. Unfortunately, the soldier must hire an attorney to make this request to the court, or attempt to do it him or herself. Fear not! Many courts will assist people with forms and procedures they must use while attempting to represent themselves.

Another popular protection provided by the SSCRA is a 6 percent interest cap on outstanding loans. In order to qualify, you must have entered into the loan arrangement before you began active duty. You must also prove that your military service affects your ability to pay the loan at the regular (pre-service) interest rate. Generally this requirement means that you make less money in the military than you made as a civilian. You must notify your lender in writing to request the interest cap.

The SSCRA provides other protections to soldiers. For example, the SSCRA also allows you to terminate your existing lease upon receipt of active duty orders, or, conversely, protects you or your dependents from eviction or mortgage foreclosure due to your absence for active duty. However, the rights under this statute must be asserted before they can be of any help. The most important part of protecting your interests is taking the initiative and using the resources available to you.

For more information or assistance concerning SSCRA or other legal matters contact the Office of the Command Judge Advocate for an appointment at 4154.

## The Chaplain's Corner

Lo(w), I am With You Always

By Chaplain (Lt. Col.) Gary A. Pendrak

JTF-Bravo Chaplain

I was told by a helicopter pilot once that the Lord was truly on the side of chopper pilots. Why in the Bible it even says, "Lo(w), I am with you always."

Well, I am not sure if that is so true. One time I had the opportunity to fly from Fort Bragg, N.C., to Fort Benning, Ga. We flew low level the last few hours of the flight. Because we were at low level, the pilots had to do a lot of maneuvering to avoid obstacles on the ground. Also, at low level, the air is the roughest.

As we approached the drop zone at Benning, we went through our pre-jump procedures. I remember I was too sick to stand up. I had to pull myself up and force myself to SAFELY go through the procedures. As we turned final onto the drop zone, the pilots had to climb to get us up to jump altitude. When the doors finally opened, I remember thinking to myself that all I wanted to do was unhook, and lie down, and get sick. About then, the Air Force Loadmaster pulled the jumpmaster back out of the door and I knew that, if I could keep from getting sick for 10 more seconds, I would be out of that airplane and on my way to firm ground.

I am sure that the Lord was with us as we bounced

around in that airplane, but it sure didn't feel like He was on our side at that moment.

Flying at altitude isn't always smooth sailing either. While in flight, airline passengers often hear the pilot announce, "Please fasten your seatbelts. We may encounter some turbulence." Even large commercial jets cruising at very high altitudes can run into rough flying conditions. I heard of a jumbo jet that was buffeted so badly that it had to make an emergency landing. Normally, you would expect a smooth ride at high altitudes, but that is not always the case.

I see a spiritual parallel. When we first trust the Lord, it seems that we are lifted high above the evils of this world. The joy of having God's indwelling Spirit and of being forgiven brings release from the turbulence of sin's guilt. But we soon realize that powerful currents are at work to bring us down.

Conflicts and problems seem to come from people or circumstance, but it may be that spiritual forces are at work. The interference created by Satan, combined with our sinful nature, can make for very rough going at times.

We must be well-protected by truth, righteousness, peace, faith, assurance, God's Word, and prayer [Eph 6:14-18] Yes, we can overcome the "turbulence" because God's Spirit within us is "greater than he who is in the world" [1 John 4:4]

## The IGUANA

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Content is edited, prepared and provided by the Joint Task Force-Bravo Public Affairs Office, APO AA 34042, in Building D-06. Telephone numbers are 011-504-234-4634, ext. 4150 or 4676. Fax is ext. 4550. or DSN 449-4150/4676. Readers with story ideas should call the Public Affairs office. All photographs are property of JTF-Bravo unless otherwise noted.

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# SAR team, medics hold rescue training



Pfc. Allison Tipton, an EMT medic, and Capt. Lynn Riat, a physicians's assistant, prepare a surgical litter stand to receive a "patient."

Story and Photos by Tech. Sgt. G.A. Volb  
Joint Task Force-Bravo Public Affairs

Three soldiers on their way to Task Force Oxelafan, El Salvador, were first lost and then found badly injured, May 7, following a search and recovery effort by Joint Task Force Bravo.

That, at least, was how the scenario was described to JTF-Bravo's SAR members and mobile surgical team at the beginning of the early morning exercise.

"We wanted to exercise our ability to conduct search and rescue operations, while providing airman, soldiers and marines training they can use when they return to their home units," said Army Lt. Col. Tony Schwalm, director of operations.

It's an important capability, according to the colonel, since JTF-Bravo is the only continuous

American presence in the region with rotary wing aircraft and an Army medical treatment facility.

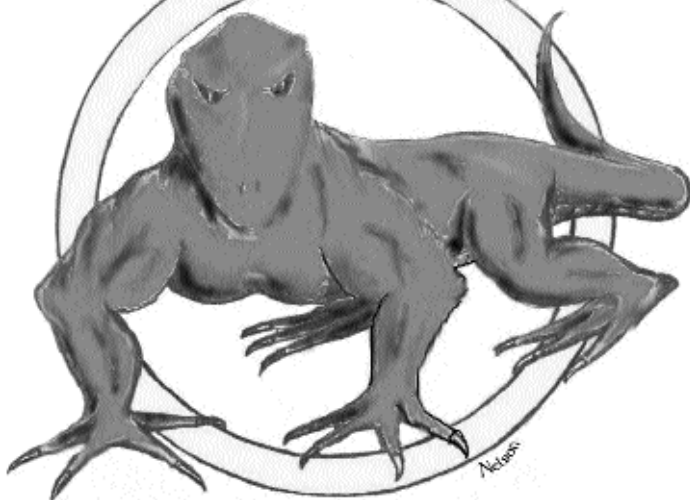
Specifically challenged during the exercise were both the SAR team and JTF-Bravo's Mobile Surgical Team from MEDEL.

"The SAR team had to locate the 'overdue' soldiers, and then perform rescue operations once they were found," said Schwalm. Written into the exercise was that the soldiers had overturned their truck and were stuck inside. The circumstances required that the team use the Jaws of Life to extract them.

In a parallel effort, the MST was tasked to load a team and equipment into a C-130 for transport to El Salvador to render medical treatment to the "injured." And though the actual flight to El Salvador was simulated, the MST contingent was faced with a

See **MEDICS**, Page 4

## IRON IGUANA



MAY 23, 2002

## Let the Games BEGIN!

1 p.m. — Formation on the all-purpose field (uniform civilian clothes)  
1:30 p.m. — 10K and Triathlon,  
2 p.m. — 3-on-3 basketball, one-pitch softball tournament  
Crazy Lizard Dive starts when triathletes are done with the pool  
5 p.m. — BBQ meal by DFAC (beer/soda sold by the Lizard Lounge)  
6 p.m. — The Main Event... the Baddest Iguana Bash pugil bout!

Afraid you'll break a nail? Mess up your hair? Or are you just *dressed* military? Get in on the action NOW!

**SIGN UP ON THE  
JTF-B WEBSERVER!**

## 10 rounds downrange



Photo by Spc. M. William Petersen

Smoke curls from the barrel of 1st Lt. Michael Way's M-9 pistol as he sends the last of his 10 rounds downrange April 24. The pistol range was opened up by ARFOR so that soldiers could stay proficient with a sidearm. While many of those at the range were experienced with the 9mm pistol, others were firing for their first time with the guidance of noncommissioned officers on the range.

## POWER OUTAGES

Power outages have been scheduled for maintenance and repairs. (P) denotes a partial area power outage  
(\*) denotes a holiday or DONSA.

AFFECTED AREA	TIME	DATE
K(P), H, E	0800-1500	MAY 18
Q(P), N(P), P(P), L(P), K	0800-1600	MAY 22
A, B, D	0800-1300	MAY 24(*)
A, B, D, E(P), I(P), F(P), H(P)	0800-1500	MAY 27(*)
Q(P), N(P), K(P), P(P), L(P), I(P), F(P), E(P), H(P)	0800-1200	MAY 29
Q, N, O, P, L, K(P), R(P)	0800-1300	JUNE 5
A, B, D	0800-1600	JUNE 8
C, F(P), I(P), Honduran Area, Old Fire Station	0800-1600	JUNE 12
Q(P), N(P), P(P), L(P) K	0800-1400	JUNE 17
Q(P), N(P), P(P), L(P) K	0800-1200	JUNE 18
Q(P), N(P), P(P), L(P) K	0800-1200	JUNE 19
Q(P), N(P), P(P), L(P) K, O	0800-1700	JUNE 20
Honduran Area, Old Fire Station	0800-1300	JUNE 21
E(P)	0800-1300	JUNE 25-27
B only	0800-1200	JULY 3

## MEDICS

*Continued from Page 3*

myriad of injuries to address via volunteer “patients” right here at Soto Cano.

“They were found to be severely injured,” said Army Lt. Col. Barrington Nash, commander of JTF-Bravo’s medical element. The MST provided initial treatment at Comalapa Airport, El Salvador, and evacuated them to Soto Cano for further surgery.

“The injuries encountered,” he said, “were a tension pneumothorax, rib fractures, shattered mandible and maxilla with compromised airway, and a transected femoral artery.” In laymen’s terms, this meant the soldiers were in bad shape.

The MST, consisting of a general surgeon, three nurses, an OR technician, flight surgeon, physician’s assistant, and an operations non-commissioned officer, were humping the entire exercise.

It was a challenge, according to Nash, because the scenario included poor communica-

tions between El Salvador and Soto Cano – there was a general lack of information on actual conditions and situation updates. But the MST didn’t miss a beat said Nash.

“The surgical team was well organized, and very methodical in their treatment,” he said, adding. “It’ll take weekly training to keep everyone sharp on their duties and to maintain proficiency.”

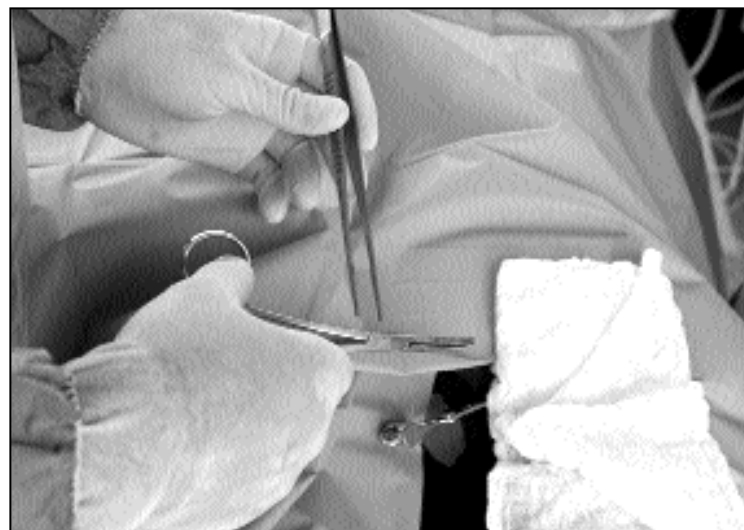
“We did very well,” said Schwalm. “The bottom line is we achieved our training objectives and saw where we need to go to improve. We can always improve.”

Schwalm highlighted the importance of such exercises, saying that in a joint environment such as Soto Cano, these types of missions show just how the various pieces of the task force work together to get the job done.

“This training leaves us all better prepared to face whatever comes our way,” said Schwalm.



Above: Army Maj. Javier Altamirano, a surgical nurse and operating room OIC, holds an IV solution for a “patient”. Behind him is the C-130 they would be evacuated out on in a real rescue mission.



Above: Army Lt. Col. Brad Waddell, a surgeon, and Spc. Matt Stewart, an operating room technician, prepare to stabilize a transected femoral artery. The “patient” was part of a May 7 search and rescue exercise.

Left: Army Maj. Sheila Hicks, a nurse anesthetist, prepares to put a “patient” under anesthesia prior to surgery during a May 7 search and rescue exercise.



## CHOKEHOLD —

*Continued from Page 1*

Operation Chokehold was a complete success and eradicated more than 648,000 marijuana plants valued at about \$15 million, said Lt. Col. Fletcher Crews, Army Forces commander and the commander of Task Force Enabler.

JTF-Bravo's piece of the joint operation is aptly described by the name of the task force.

"Task Force Enabler works in support of the Country Team and our helicopters enable them to do things they wouldn't normally be able to do," said Crews. "The terrain was very restrictive for ground movement and most of the fields were at the 4,000 foot elevation level. Without our help they couldn't have hit 30-35 (marijuana) fields in five days," he said.

Five agents from the U.S. Drug Enforcement Agency participated in the operation and they echoed the importance of JTF-Bravo to the counterdrug effort in Costa Rica.

"JTF-Bravo personnel showed an outstanding caliber of expertise and we couldn't do the mission without them," said Rich Dobrich, a DEA agent based in San Jose, Costa Rica. "JTF-Bravo helicopters are the only way to get the police to the objective site."

For the approximately 30 Costa Rican police forces that were involved in Operation Chokehold, the opportunity to do



*Photo by 1st Lt. Richard D. Komurek*

**Costa Rican anti-drug police riding in a 1-228 UH-60 Black Hawk carry a marijuana plant seized from a field they destroyed during Operation Chokehold. The plant will be tested in a lab and kept as evidence for the prosecution of marijuana growers, if they are found.**

rappel and spies is a welcome experience that helps them accomplish their goals much more quickly and easily.

"It's great because they (JTF-Bravo) has equipment we don't have," said Marricio Ramirez, a Costa Rican drug control policeman. "It's good training and it is also safe."

Ramirez also said in previous years

the drug control police had tried to work in the remote region of rainforest by land, but that it took one month to enter the zone and one month of hard labor to eradicate the marijuana fields. This is the main reason the Costa Ricans are so happy to see the arrival of UH-60 Black Hawks and CH-47 Chinooks from JTF-Bravo each year for the operation.

those elements work together is very hard ... it was a small but complicated operation."

Under the direction of United States Southern Command, JTF-Bravo has performed Central Skies missions in Central America since 1999 and typically conducts six to seven counterdrug operations throughout the region each year.

## National Guard rock band plays live for Nicaraguan village

**Story and photo by Spc. M. William Petersen**

*Editor*

In the area surrounding El Coral School in El Coral, Nicaragua, a sound could be heard that wasn't typical of a school day.

Instead of the usual sounds of teachers giving lessons or kids playing between classes, the courtyard and surrounding streets were bathed in rock and roll.

The 147th Army Band from the South Dakota National Guard had traveled to Joint Task Force-Chontales as part of the humanitarian operation's closing ceremonies. Divided into a rock band and a jazz band, the musicians were given the opportunity to play for the local population, many of whom had never seen a live rock show.

The rock band's first show was at the El Coral School. Hundreds of students and local children showed up for the concert, as well as people from the surrounding neighborhood.

The band played a variety of rock, including Dave Matthews Band, Chicago and Van Morrison, during their two hour-long sets.

"I pick a lot of the songs, but the other members bring in whatever they want," said Staff Sgt. Dave Barkus, the rock band's NCO in charge and lead guitarist. "We'll play whatever gets people to get up and dance."

The 30-member Army band varied in experience from three soldiers fresh out of basic training to 17-year career soldiers. And, like many rock bands, the rock combo had gone through three drummers in one year. The current incarnation of



**The 147th Army Band rock combo plays a Dave Matthews song for the children of El Coral, Nicaragua during the National Guard band's visit to Joint Task Force-Chontales.**

the band has been playing for nine months. Nicaragua is the 147th's third visit to Central America. They've also played in Guatemala and Panama.

In their four-days of playing around Chontales, the band was able to see the completed work of JTF-Chontales. Several shows were played at schools and clinics that were built by American and Nicaraguan troops over the four-month operation.

"I think it's a great privilege to play here," said Barkus. "We're very proud to see the things we're doing for this country and we're glad to be a small part of it."

# Army restricts UH-60 Black Hawk flights

By Tonya Johnson

Army News Service

WASHINGTON – Hundreds of Black Hawk helicopters were grounded except for mission-essential flights May 1 after a potential transmission problem was discovered in one.

Approximately 960 Black Hawks in both the active Army and National Guard have been restricted, officials said, as the Army conducts an assessment to see if the problem is isolated or if other Black Hawks have a similar problem. Under the restriction, only mission-essential flights such as medical evacuation and combat are allowed.

The restriction involves the UH-60A utility helicopter, EH-60A electronic warfare version and the UH-60Q medivac chopper. The UH-60L helicopters were not affected because they have a different transmission.

The transmission problem was detected when an Army aviation unit, the 57th Medical Company, at Fort Bragg, N.C., experienced persistent low oil pressure problems with the transmission of one of its UH-60A Black Hawks.

The transmission was sent to Corpus Christi Army Depot, Texas, for repair. The part was disassembled and a cracked planetary carrier was determined as the reason for the low oil pressure. The planetary carrier, manufactured by RAF Industries, is a large plate-shaped component within the transmission that has no finite replacement life.

The Army Aviation and Missile Command, Corpus Christi Army Depot and Sikorsky, the designer of the aircraft, are investigating to find out the possible cause of the cracked carrier, officials said.

"The Black Hawk has a great performance record, and this is the first cracked planetary carrier found in 3.5 million flight hours," said Bob Hunt, Army Aviation and Missile Command spokesperson. "The Army Aviation and Missile Command, Corpus Christi Army De-



File Photo

**A 1-228 UH-60 Black Hawk maintains a hover during Serach and Rescue Team training. The Army grounded all A-model Black Hawks May 1 after a potential transmission problem was discovered in one.**

pot and Sikorsky are working vigorously to solve this issue. A lot of people are putting in a lot of hours to get to the bottom of this."

If a planetary carrier is cracked, stress is placed on the transmission gears and could cause internal shim damage, officials said.

If pieces of the shim fall into the transmission oil sump, the transmission filter could become blocked and cause low oil pressure.

When the part doesn't function, it can't transfer engine power to the main rotor system. The rotor system could continue to operate without power allowing an autorotation landing or the failed carrier could cause a jam causing the rotor system not to work.

But Hunt said the restriction shouldn't affect Army readiness. More than 500 L series Black Hawk helicopters will be used until the Army can resolve the problem. The restrictions will also not stop Black Hawks in Afghanistan from flying combat missions, Hunt said.

There have been no Black Hawk accidents in the past due to a planetary carrier crack or failure, Hunt said. There also haven't been any major problems with the Black Hawks in years, he said.

The last major maintenance problem occurred in the late 1980s when there was a problem with the aircraft stabilator.

Hunt said an update concerning the restriction will be issued within the next seven to 10 days.

# Marine braves gunfire to save life on interstate

By Cpl. Danielle M. Bacon

Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton

CAMP PENDLETON, Calif. – It's not every day a Marine gets the opportunity to save someone's life, but for one local Marine who braved a gunman's bullets to rescue a stranger May 1 along Interstate 5, it's a chance he will never forget.

Lance Cpl. Trevor Farley ignored the gunfire and whisked wounded tow-truck driver Brian Naylor away. He also attempted to chase down the shooter and point him out to the California Highway Patrol.

The shooter, Henry Ricardo Enciso Jr., 26, a Los Angeles resident, fled onto the base and turned to fire when confronted by military police. The MPs and local law enforcement officers shot him dead.

Naylor suffered multiple gunshot wounds from bullets fired by Enciso. He's recovering at a local hospital.

"I still have my husband, and he can still be a father," said Melissa Naylor, wife of the wounded man, as she fought

tears during a news conference here May 3.

At first, Farley had no idea lending a hand meant saving a life.

"I saw a blue Cadillac broken down, and was going to help, because I am mechanically inclined, but I saw the tow-truck pull up and decided they didn't need me anymore," Farley said.

Farley was at the Del Mar Chapel waiting to attend a class, about 70 yards away from the car, when he heard a sound that now keeps him awake at night.

"When I heard the first shot, I looked back in that direction and I saw the shooter, and I just reacted," said Farley, who jumped the fence separating Interstate 5 from Camp Pendleton.

Many cars passed the accident scene, but no one stopped to help the bleeding truck driver as he ran north on the south-bound interstate.

"After I jumped the fence, I started running towards the shooter, but I saw Brian needed my help. By this time, he was running back to the truck in a state of shock. He had been shot four or five times already."

Farley helped Naylor run toward a call box 200 yards away - until the wounded driver couldn't run anymore.

"Once he stopped really running, I was dragging him towards the call box," said Farley, an Arizona native.

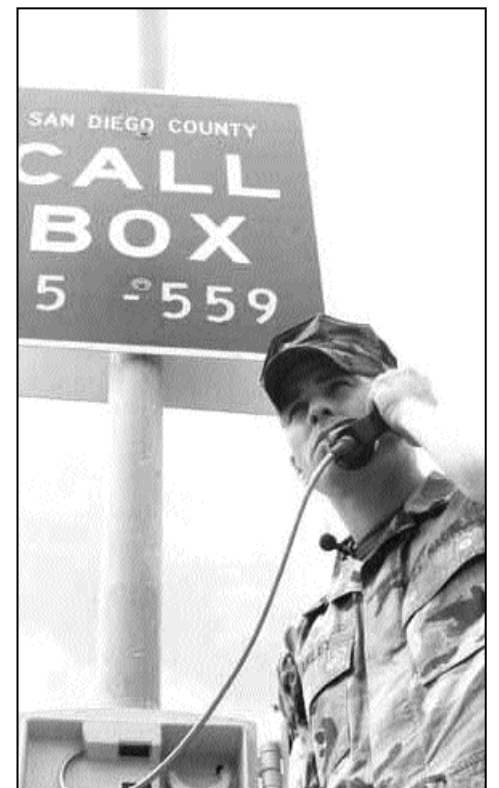
"It was all adrenaline. My knee didn't feel any pain," added Farley, currently awaiting a medical separation from the Corps because of a knee injury suffered a few months ago in a car accident.

Since the rescue, Farley says, his knee has caused him a lot of pain, but doesn't compare with what Naylor is going through.

"I have gone to see him every day since Wednesday. Well, not every day. I gave him a break on Saturday and Sunday," Farley chuckled. "He looks better every day."

The former civil air patrolman attributes his willingness to help to the CAP and the Marines.

"I think it had a lot to do with what I learned in the Marine Corps and Civil Air Patrol," said Farley, who teaches 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing personnel how to drive humvees.



Marine Corps photo

**Lance Cpl. Trevor Farley stands at the call box where he dragged the victim.**

## BRIEFS

**Thrift Savings Plan**

The Thrift Savings Plan is a retirement savings and investment plan that allows service members to save a portion of their pre-tax pay in a special retirement account. Service members may sign up to participate in the TSP program during the open season from May 15 - July 31. Current TSP participants may also change their contribution types and amounts. For more information contact the Finance Office at ext. 4282.

**Softball Season**

Softball season starts May 28. Coaches can sign up their teams at the Recreation Center now. The pre-season meeting will be May 21 at 10:00 a.m. For more info, contact Luis at 4268.

**College Courses**

The next term of 3-credit college classes will be from June 3 - July 26 6-9 p.m. Go to the Education Center and give your education records, transcripts and other documentation to Sandra Guille for 75 percent government-paid tuition assistance. Take your tuition assistance form to UMUC, Bldg H-70. You or your G.I. Bill can pay (or charge) the remaining 25 percent to Luis Ortiz. Registration starts May 1. The Education Center is open from 7:30-11:30 and noon - 4 p.m.

**New car sales**

Exchange New Car Sales is currently available for soldiers wishing to purchase a privately owned vehicle, including motorcycles, while stationed at Soto Cano Air Base. The sales office is located near the Base Exchange and Joint Security Forces building, and is open Mondays-Fridays from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. and Saturdays from 8 a.m. to noon. For more information, callex. 4886 or 4883.

**"All users" e-mails**

By order of the commander, any non-critical information that needs to be passed to the entire JTF-Bravo populace shall be done via the public affairs office. Information may be sent to the PAO e-mail distribution group. Public affairs and the Power Lizard are members of this e-mail group. From these offices, the information can be posted in The Iguana, on the Commander's Channel or E-News, sent via ALL e-mail, and/or broadcast on the Power Lizard, according to the point of contact's request. Users will not send non-critical information using all of the e-mail groups (AFFOR, ARFOR, JSF, etc.). Time-sensitive information will be sent only by the command group, PAO or J6. Questions may be directed to the J-6 office at ext. 4167 or the PAO at ext. 4150.

# Emergency services conduct drill at Pentagon

By Linda D. Kozaryn

American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON, May 8, 2002 — For those who witnessed the Sept. 11 terrorist attack on the Pentagon last year, the sounds of chaos that filled the building's center courtyard this morning may have been a vivid reminder of that tragic day.

Gray smoke billowed from an explosive in a concrete planter and filled the courtyard with a hazy mist. Screams, pleas for help and cries for medics echoed off the building's granite walls, interspersed with the shouted commands of security police and other first responders.

Unlike Sept. 11, the chaos this time was not real. The victims were actors and their wounds were fake. This was an exercise designed to test military and civilian community emergency personnel's response to a chemical attack.

Defense officials had warned the Pentagon's 20,000 workers that Arlington County's Chemical Weapons Full-Scale Exercise was to be held in the courtyard. About 300 people took part in the four-hour exercise that started at 9 a.m. Dubbed Operation Misty Court, the training was sponsored by the Department of Justice Domestic Preparedness Program.

Defense Protective Service and military medical personnel were the first to arrive on the scene after a simulated explosion and release of a chemical agent. They found service members acting as dazed, frightened victims. Arlington County emergency response units arrived in two trucks and began hosing down the victims.

"The initial decontamination is to hose them down, and then once the situation is under control, then they can start medical treatment," said Sgt. 1st Class Ronald Wadsworth of the North Atlantic Regional Medical Command. Co-located with Walter Reed Army Medical Center, the command oversees a 22-state area.

"This whole area is now contaminated," Wadsworth said, indicating the lawn where the victims had been hosed down. "They will not allow anybody who isn't protected into this area, and they're going to have to dig all of this up and dispose of it, because that's now contaminated waste."

The scenario involved an explosion during a ceremony, followed by the dispersal of an agent in the resulting smoke. When medical personnel from the Pentagon's DiLorenzo Clinic arrived on the scene, they found victims with shrapnel wounds.

Some were in shock. Others suffered from dizziness, confusion, drooling, muscle aches and other nerve agent symptoms. Orange tags described their conditions to test emergency personnel's responses.

U.S. Marine Corps Cpl. Andrew Webber of Schaller, Iowa, volunteered to be a victim. He said he was in the Pentagon on Sept. 11.

"This is helpful for everyone involved," Webber said. "It gives the civilian authorities a better idea of what's going on. So hopefully, if something like this ever happened either here or anywhere else they could be better prepared."

Army Capt. Andrew Massa, assigned to the Defense Protective Service's Biological-Chemical Joint Operations Cell, was one of the officials evaluating the exercise. He's a reservist called to active duty for 179 days after Sept. 11.

"This is extremely important to improve our interoperability and memorandums of understanding, agreement and mutual support between defense officials and Arlington County," Massa said. Defense Department responders,



Photo by Linda D. Kozaryn

An exercise official watches as firefighters of Arlington County, Va., provide emergency services to service members acting as victims during a May 8, 2002, drill simulating a chemical attack on the Pentagon.

he continued, need to learn to work with "civilian counterparts, particularly because in many cases they have more mature assets than what we have organically."

Preparing in advance is very important, said Lt. Col. Randy Smith of the Security Division in Marine Corps Headquarters. "There's a lot of different people that would respond to something like this," he said. "Civilian first responders like Arlington County Fire Department and then you have military responders."

"Every installation has a security department, fire department, hazardous material folks," Smith said. "Ensuring that they're all working together and not at cross purposes would alleviate problems."

Exercises help first responders identify any problem areas, Smith noted. "Is it a communications problem, an equipment problem? We look at how best we can work together."

Since Sept. 11, defense officials have installed monitoring equipment and intensified efforts to develop work force training on responding to a chemical or biological threat, according to John Jester, chief of the Defense Protective Service.

One of the main concerns in a chemical or biological incident is that first responders will become victims themselves, he noted.

"It's very important when the first call comes in, you try to obtain as much information as possible so your officers can approach in a very cautious manner," he said. "They have to be careful not to touch someone that may be contaminated. They have been trained to recognize those symptoms of, for example, a chemical incident."

The Defense Department has also worked to improve the notification system within the building, Jester said.

"We had to think about how fast we could communicate to 20,000 people," he said. "So we're enhancing our public address system. We're testing a system now using the computer, because everybody has a computer terminal on his or her desk. A little siren goes off on your computer, a screen pops up and tells you this is an emergency and gives instructions on what to do."

Overall preparedness for a weapons of mass destruction attack, Jester said, "is in very good shape, but we're not where we want to be. We're always looking for ways to improve."



# "ONE TEAM, ONE FIGHT"

## 1-228 finds unity in challenging missions, hard work

**By Spc. M. William Petersen**  
Editor

Despite the many personnel and the diverse missions that 1st Battalion, 228th Aviation Regiment faces, their motto, "One Team, One Fight," seems to define the unit best.

Personnel shortages and difficult demands on the only Army aviation unit in Central America haven't stopped the job from getting done.

As a U.S. Army South unit, 1-228 has a much larger area of operations than Joint Task Force-Bravo. While JTF-B operates in the area of Central America, 1-228 has operation throughout Central America, the Caribbean and South America.

Within this theater of operations, 1-228 list of missions that, on top of the demand to be ready to deploy at all times, requires them to conduct stability and support and command

and control operations for theater Army aviation assets. 1-228th also conduct search and rescue, aero-medical evacuation and force protection operations.

"We can adapt to anything that comes down the road as long as we have the assets," said Maj. James Walton, executive officer for 1-228.

Up until 1999, JTF-B had its own aviation assets known as D Co., 1-228. D Co. was a subsidiary unit of 1-228 in Panama. When forces

withdrew from Panama, the battalion was relocated to Soto Cano, and JTF-B lost its designated aviation assets. The changeover was not painless for 1-228, either.

"We've ended up with an undermanned, under-equipped aviation battalion," said Walton. "A good example is, we're authorized three crews for the CH-47 Chinooks, but we have five Chinooks."

With the number and diversity of missions that the Winged Warriors face, this shortage hasn't prevented them from getting their job done.

"We have not dropped a mission since I've been here," Walton said. "That's testament to the crew chiefs, the pilots, and headquarters company; everybody chips in to execute the mission safely."

In addition to training constantly for their missions here, the NCOs and officers of 1-228 have to keep personnel trained in common tasks. This makes free time scarce, but helps to build an undeniable camaraderie among the Winged Warriors, and being part of the unit becomes its own reward, said Walton.

"These guys bust their butts day in and day out. In my opinion, they work harder than any other unit on post. A special bond forms because they're working together and deploying," said Walton.

"They get to meet people and see things that no one else in JTF-B gets to see. They work hard getting there, but for all their work they get their just reward. We're the best kept secret in Army aviation. We all came into the Army and trained to do our mission in a real-world situation," Walton said. "We in the 228th do it every day."



**Top:** A UH-60 Black Hawk carries a rappelling soldier during search and rescue training.

**Above:** 1-228 serves as the wings for MEDEL's medical evacuations.

**Below:** Special Forces soldiers train with the assistance of the Winged Warriors.



*File photo*



*Photo by Spc. M. William Petersen*

**Top:** A soldier climbs "Jacobs Ladder" into a 1-228CH-47 Chinook during training.

**Above:** Sgt. 1st Class Wallace Clore, first sergeant for B Company, 1-228, watches the Honduran landscape after acting as crew chief during a multinational airborne jump.